

# SAFETY ALERT

The Army Safety Center recently investigated an accident that occurred when the “tow trolley risers” on a 34-foot tower failed as the soldier exited the door of the aircraft fuselage mockup. Both legs of the riser assembly failed as it reached full extension due to excessive wear and grease contamination. Examination of the riser assembly revealed that it was unserviceable along an 18-inch section that comes in contact with the steel-catch cable at the end of the 300-foot slide. The exposed steel-catch cable was coated with grease to prevent oxidation. The combination of the grease and the repeated nylon-to-metal contact contributed to the breakdown of the Type X nylon webbing of the riser assembly.

Only limited guidance is available in FM 57-220 for the care and maintenance of these riser assemblies. Until further guidance can be developed, recommend all organizations with towers of this type take the following actions:

- Prior to use, inspect all “tow trolley risers” described in Chapter 4, Section IV of FM 57-220 and ensure they are not cut, frayed or contaminated with petroleum products. Replace any defective riser assemblies.
- Procure and install a non-abrasive cover (rubber or canvas) for the steel-catch cable.
- Establish a procedure/checklist for joint inspections by the issuing and using organization to ensure that the tower and all ancillary equipment (risers, harnesses) are in serviceable condition prior to each use.
- For towers that are not used on a routine basis, establish a procedure to remove the riser assemblies from the tower between uses and store in accordance with TM 10-1670-201-23, page 5-1, paragraph 5-2(b).
- Ensure the Director of Public Works or other qualified agency/unit, conducts annual inspections of all 34-foot towers certifying structural integrity and serviceability.

Leaders must remain alert to identify hazards, and stay actively involved in all stages of training, planning through execution, to ensure both realism and safety in every training event.

Gene M. LaCoste  
Brigadier General, GS  
Director of Army Safety

SAN 111000MAY00



U. S. ARMY SAFETY CENTER